

REMARKS

Applicant notes with appreciation the Examiner's indication that claims 2, 6-8, 12 and 17 would be allowable over the prior art currently of record if rewritten in independent form. Accordingly, Applicant has incorporated all of the limitations from claim 2 into independent claims 1, 19 and 20. As such, all claims 1, 3-20, 22, and 24-25, are now in condition for allowance. Claims 2, 21 and 23 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer.

In view of the cancellation of claim 21, Applicant respectfully submits that the rejections of claim 21 under 35 USC §112 and under 35 USC §101 are now moot and should be withdrawn.

As claims 22, 24 and 25 are now dependent upon allowable claim 1, Applicants respectfully requests that the rejection under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by EP 404368 is now moot and should be withdrawn.

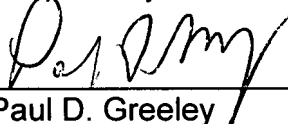
As claim 1 includes the allowable limitation previously recited in claim 2, and since claims 3-5, 9-11, 13, 15 and 18-20 all depend either directly or indirectly from amended claim 1, the rejection thereof under 35 USC §103(a) as obvious over EP 404368 is now moot and should be withdrawn.

Similarly, claims 10, 11, 14, 16, 18-20, 22, 24 and 25 all depend either directly or indirectly from amended claim 1, hence the rejection thereof under 35 USC §103(a) as obvious over WO 99/03902 is now moot and should also be withdrawn.

Consideration and allowance of application is respectfully requested.

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Date

Respectfully submitted,


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